

Miscellaneous (short) Ramblings: A lot is going in DC right now and a lot has gone on since I sent you my first missive of the year yesterday. Here is a quick rundown of my thoughts on many things in no particular order:

- The way the Obama Administration has handled the so-called “underwear bomber” on Christmas Day is atrocious. This guy was a foreign national operating as part of an inter-connected worldwide organization with the intent to kill United States citizens and further a process of bringing down our government and destroying our way of life. He should have been immediately declared an enemy combatant, interrogated, and tried in a military tribunal, as has been done in similar incidents for more than a century. He was injured and his mission had failed. There was significant potential to garner intelligence about his network and connections in order to prevent future attacks, and save lives. Yet he has been treated as though he was caught smoking or tampering with the smoke detector in the airplane lavatory. He was read his Miranda rights, assigned an attorney, and told NOT to say anything. Unbelievable. This administration just fails to see that radical Islamic terrorism is a serious threat, unlike the rest of us, and therefore we are less safe.

- Because of their singular obsession with government-run health care, the Democrats punted a bunch of issues on deadline to the end of February. However, this new deadline is fast approaching. Among the issues that should have been taken up last year yet still remain unresolved include: new permanent death tax exemptions and rates; a 21% cut in the rates doctors are paid by Medicare; a proposed increase in the national debt limit of \$1.6 trillion to cover the enormous deficits for one year; reauthorizations of the Department of Transportation and the FAA; and a host of other issues.

- The one place where I DO agree with the President is that Fed Chairman Bernanke should be confirmed for a second term. I don't get to vote on this, but the Senate vote will be held Thursday or Friday.

- Tomorrow night, the President apparently will call for a freeze in non-defense so-called discretionary spending. That is about 15% of the total federal budget. It also was increased by \$140 billion last year. So he is freezing spending after he increased it by 25% in one year. It's a little like the guy who robs your house and then returns your toaster-oven and expects you to be happy about it.

- Interestingly, Democrats on the Appropriations committee are already criticizing the President's freeze as “too tough.” This says that at least some Congressional Democrats still do not understand how severe our fiscal problems are, and that they no longer feel compelled to support their President on all of his policies. The honeymoon ended rather quickly.

- Governor Schwarzenegger came calling to Capitol Hill last week looking for money for the state budget crisis. Federal formulas that disadvantage large states like California ought to be changed, but the state legislature has expanded many Federal programs to pay more people a greater amount money than the Feds require or than other states actually do. That's a California problem, not a federal one.

- One of California's problems is that we simply cannot continue to be a magnet for those on welfare because we pay more than other states, while simultaneously repelling the very people who pay for those services with the highest tax rates of any state (recently surpassing

New Jersey). This results in welfare recipients moving into the state and taxpayers/job creators moving out. This cannot go on for long.

- In my view, the Supreme Court decision last week was the correct one. It merely allows corporations to spend general monies on political ads as unions have been able to do. If

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unions and corporations were required to get shareholder/member approval before using the money for politics, that would be fine. But the unfettered, unequal, and unfair spending by government unions in politics is the single biggest reason we have deficits at the state and federal level.

I remain respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Campbell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" and last name "Campbell" clearly distinguishable.

Congressman John Campbell
Member of Congress